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Mine Own.

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Rev — Hart, from the writer. W. D. Sept. 1866.

"MINE OWN:"

BEING

A COLLECTION OF

POETICAL CONCEITS,

BY

WILLIAM DANKS.

As well may some wild maiden waste her love
Upon the calm front of a marble Jove.—
I cannot draw regard of thy great eyes.
I love thee Poesy.

NOTTINGHAM:
PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY JOHN FLINTOFF.
1863.

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PREFACE.

A desire to preserve some few, though indistinct, mementoes of a period which cannot possibly occur twice in one life, a period out of which all the fulness of the future springs, has induced me to publish the following waifs and strays of *mine own* thought.

I do not desire or deserve praise for them, neither would I tempt hostile criticism, my brood are callow ; their chief beauty to me is they exist, and their faults are *mine own.*

I would have them simply to be like a pleasant nook, lying somewhere nigh the bye-path of one's life—passed but still remembered—to which we might oft return, and in any mood, to admire or to despise, there being none to say us nay.

And now courteous reader, with all due and proper respect to you, I will close this preface in the usual manner by saying, if you in reading derive a tythe of the pleasure I have experienced in writing them, you are fortunate.

Sherwood Hill,
Autumn, 1863.

"MINE OWN."

TO MARY.

All hero-thoughts, all love songs wild and tender,
    All passionate flutterings of our spirit wings,
Poets have wreathéd with immortal splendour,
    Since God first crowned them kings.
Yes, kings of all things beautiful and holy
    From thronèd spheres above ;
Down to the white queen-lily, drooping lowly
    In dreams of lily love.

Therefore, whene'er gushed forth the voice unbidden
    Of this immortal silver-throated song ;
Since gleamed the king of bards, half beauty hidden,
    The old Greek gods among ;
Some chords there have been ringing royal-true,
    And beautiful as night,
As through dark dawnings shine wild streaks of blue,
    And flakes of flying light.

Therefore, my song, even thou art halo-ringèd
With silver, from the everlasting dawn ;
Then go to her for whom thou hast been wingèd,
With pearl-light from the dawn ;
And when she grieve, and joy and beauty are
As strainéd voices o'er a twilight sea,
Rise thou above her sorrow like a star,
And say thou thus for me.

"As heaven crowns with starlight desert lands,
"As Sunrise crowns the hills with purple sky,
"So sorrow comes with flowers in her hands,
"To crown us ere we die."
I would that any song or dream of mine,
Could beauty-fringe sad hours,
For then should every fallen tear of thine,
Rise up in wondrous flowers.

TO LIZZIE.

As golden dawns are silver-crowned
With wild bird–echoes of the chaunt above,
So by soft echoes may thy life be crowned,
Soft, silver echoes of a golden love.

PSYCHE.

Psyche, Ah ! stay thy silvery flight,
And fold thy wandering wing !
Where rose-buds opening to the night
Wild fragrance round thee fling.

Bright Queen of radiant loveliness
Thy spell around me throw !
And let each jet and breezy tress
Waft o'er my weary brow.

Thy spell to chase the night away,
From Passion's tossing strife ;
A rainbow beam from heavenly day,
Of beauty, love and life.

There let me gaze into those eyes,
Where rapture bathes in light,
And wild, deep, yearning ectasies,
Shall thrill me with delight.

Psyche, then fold thy pinions bright,
While yonder mourning queen
Weeps o'er Endymion 'mid her flight,
With tears of glimmering sheen ;

Like beckoning seraphs wreathed in light,
Shining thro' rolling years !
They brightly, in the deep blue night,
Glitter, those starry tears !

Psyche then stay when Cynthia reigns,
Throned on the midnight dome ;
When Vesper spreads her dewy wings,
To call the wanderer home.

NIGHT.

With lilies whose petals are silver,
And lilies whose petals are white,
Moonbeams have crested the billows, broad breasted,
To war for the queen of the night.

Ah ! vain is their strength and their fury,
And vain shall their lily-crests be,
For isles of the far night, are crownèd with starlight,
To rule o'er the sullen-voiced sea.

MORNING.

Pearl-edgéd sea-swells of sapphire,
Roll eastward from cavern and steep,
For the dawn-halo tender, is fringing with splendour,
The cities that border the deep.

Oh ! waves, ye shall die ere ye reach her,
As waves who have chased her before,
For dawn golden-ringèd, is false and swift-wingèd,
And gone ere ye die on the shore.

AMY.

I.

The car of day is broken in the west;
Its load of splendour lies upon the lea;
And coldly shines the marble o'er her breast,
A pallid island in a rosy sea.
Drip through the drooping bough,
Drip on her buried brow,
No rosy gleams;
Calmly she lieth there,
Calm in her golden hair,
And golden dreams.

II.

The flush of faded fern is on the slope;
The flush of falling eve is on the wave;
And flushed with dawn-hues of immortal hope,
The light of all our love is on her grave.
The happy dream-glow lies
Upon her closèd eyes,
Thro' the dark hours:
Break not her slumber deep,—
Baptise her holy sleep
With holy flowers.

III.

Dream on pure heart beneath the tender moss,
Creep, purple-fingered moss above her breast,
Slant softly o'er her, shadow of the Cross,
And make grand twilight round her silver rest.
Oh folded violet,
The morning is not yet;
Dream on, dream on,
Till from the eternal shore,
Time ebb to flow no more,
And night is gone.

ON A FLYLEAF.

When in our hearts grey grief-fringed clouds of time,
Star after star shall quell,
Old bells of love from this quaint book shall chime,
More silver-voiced than pearléd rolls of rhyme,
That e'er from Poet fell.

More silver-voiced? Ah true! ah starry true!
For faint heard thro' long years,
As glides moon-splendour o'er the waveless blue,
Wild music gushes forth where love once grew;
The song of fallen tears.

THE LAND OF BURIED YEARS.

The finger of the wind on organ-elms,
The song of reapèd tears,
The eternal voices are of those far realms,
Where Time has buried years.

Like plaintive harp-chords old familiar tones,
Faint falling on our ears,
Float from beneath the shadows of the thrones,
Of vainly buried years.

Deep-browed and calm-eyed in the dim grey light,
Immortal bards and seers,
Who went forth crowned with song into the night
Of buried deeds and years,

Like carven marble by no splendour lit,
Though gazing at the spheres,—
Bear shoulder high the dais whereon sit
The ranks of dead King-years.

Among the branchéd glooms of this calm land,
The Gods that man reveres—
The men of steel-clear head and iron hand—
Wear crowns of other years.

But ah! for us some eyes have starry light,
Seen thro' our once-wept tears;
And Kings o'er heads that know, and arms of might,
Are loves of by-gone years.

ODE TO FANCY.

Queen of Beauty's sole dominion,
Waves afar thy silver pinion ;
Glancing in the rainbow portal
Of the golden sinking sun,
Scattering floods of light immortal
Ere the monarch's reign be done !

Empress of the wandering wing,
Far thy amber radiance fling !
O'er our hearts in softening beauty
Pour that flood of light divine,
Drooping love and flagging duty,
Rouse them at the glorious sign.

Fancy hail ! from Heaven descending,
Seraph splendours round thee blending ;
Visions bright of golden glory
Round thy jewelled car unfold,
Joyous youth and wisdom hoary,
Listen as thy dreams are told.

Empress of the wandering wing,
Far thy silvery splendour fling ;
While each beaming blissful vision
Bursts in light through Nature's gloom,
Heavenly hopes and dreams Elysian,
Gild the darkness of the tomb !

As stars unfold their wings amid the shades
That shroud in gloom the last rich wave of day ;
So when the glory of the present fades,
It passes not away.

Kind deeds and noble sympathies there are,
That weave a silver beauty o'er sad thought,
Each true and loving act an evening Star,
With heaven-glory fraught.

There is more deep, grand music in the past,
Around those calm, clear stars of memory's heaven,
There is more holy radiance round them cast,
Than the present e'er has given.

The light of Stars, but less, Ah ! far less cold
With halo wreathes the brow that Love has lost,
And sweeter harpings rise from hallowed mould,
Than Life can ever boast.

FAREWELL.

Farewell, farewell ? I could not say farewell,
To all my soul's deep Love ;
For Love rose terrible while reason fell,
Tearing my heart that knew his might so well,
From all save thee I love.
But God the loving conquers agony,
And gives us strength to bear ;
So taught by grief, and self-contained and free,
Love shall endure between my Life and me,
As pure as she is fair.

A LOVE SONG.

Though from the summer's palsied hand
Falleth the faded lily;
Though fox-glove spires through all the land,
Beneath the wizard's outstretched wand,
Have fallen faint and chilly;
A laugh of flowers the sad world hath,—
Sad world and pale and old,—
Strange flowers that fear not winter's wrath,
Wild flowers that spring around our path
In bells of blue and gold.
The queen of all the flowers divine,
Whose wings have waved near me,
Droops from thativory hand of thine—
Then let the winged flower be mine,—
The flower whose fruit is thee.
No Autumn gale shall scatter wide
Those petals never-fading;
For ever bright in summer pride,
No power shall snatch it from my side,
For love is never-fading.
No envious strife with ruthless hand,
It's radiant stem shall sever;
Transplanted from the Spirit-land,
By Eden's purest breezes fanned,
Its bloom will last for ever.

BASLE.

✠

A hill-guarded paradise crowning long toil, is Basle to the sitter in a railway car who has fought the sixteen white eyed hours that scowl between Paris and the frontier of Switzerland.

The instinct of the English tourist, on entering a foreign village, guides him, if not diverted by hunger or thirst, to the Gothic tower, or Grecian dome, or ancient Swiss turret from which the Cross keeps watch above the quaint cottage-roofs. Obeying this instinct we threaded the narrow streets until beneath the shadow of the church, leaning on a crumbling parapet, and surrounded by the twilight of most delicious deeps of chesnut bough, we looked forth and down upon a stately river. And here upon the breezy terrace by the church of Basle first I saw the Rhine.

He was rushing swiftly by the meadow-slopes, with little wings of white beneath the antique tower, and on in the joy of his strength past the broken bridge. In the unwrinkled splendour of his eternal youth, glided he among the cupolas and minarets of the aged city, as the unsounded stream of Art, which is the love of all things beautiful and therefore true, slides solemnly seaward amid the bowing walls of prejudice, and the shaken towers of narrowness and wrong.

Pale green and silvery with the tears that drip for ever from the everlasting snow, as the city turrets seem silvery with the hoar-frost of the early morning we speak of as long ago; joyous and foam flaked and swift, but with the unspeakable calm of conscious might, which owns no ebb nor flow; thus radiant, thus strong, thus beautiful thus flows the Rhine past Basle. Far across his broad breast, fading from pine-black into purple, from purple into blue, and from blue into the haze that fringes heaven; far beyond the crystal murmur of his uncertain voices, rolls in deep waves from hill to hill, the legended Black Forest.

There are strange glows of rose and crimson, through thy shafted oriels, thou olden church of Basle, and quiet glooms around thy vaulted aisles; but dim shine thy glories on the cold grey stone; harsh are the glooms beneath thy pillared roof; for the chesnut depths of shadow are beside thee; the purple of far hill sides is around thee; the silver-green of water is beneath thee; and unseen stars, within blue deeps of heaven, for ever look upon thee.

Broken and mutilated as the story of their deeds, the hewn and chiselled forms of men are still upon thy western front; crumbling into dust within the council-chamber, like the men who once held solemn council there, are the last faint colours of "The dance of death," but thou, in thine age, hast no such wealth of memory as that wild Rhine, in his unfading youth.

These are my thoughts of the first Swiss city I ever visited, and with such dreamy images passing and repassing, as it were, behind the curtain of my brain, I was swept amid the beech-slopes of the smaller Alpine hills to Olton, and by the lake of Sempach to Lucerne.

ABOUT TWO PICTURES.

✠

There are two pictures which contain perhaps two perfect types of woman-hood, painted by hands that never clasped each other, each of a different land and of a different age. One is Titian's Magdalen in the museum at Naples; the other is Maclise's "Origin of the harp," now, I believe, in the collection of Mr. A. Potter, of Liverpool. Let us turn first to S. Mary Magdalen, as being the higher type.

Her large and spiritual eyes are lifted heaven-ward, as passionately as she saw afar the face of Him she loved so well on earth. Open, below, as if her head were but just raised from reading, lies the Book.

One hand is pressed upon her bosom to stay the breathless beating of her heart; and tangled masses of grand auburn hair stream along her lily shoulder, in contrast rich as branches bronzed by Autumn, seen against the piled snow-cities of the sky.

The tinge of rose, that glimmers through the earnest pallor of her cheek, is twilight-rich as flush of painted glass on sculptured ivory; and by the light of those divine eyes, deep-blue, and passionate, and brimming with hot tears, we see far down among the aisles and arches of her loving soul. And there, amid strange chords and echoes of unutterable music, Prayer kneels priest-like near the living altar, and all the crowding Thoughts have bowed themselves to worship. And the storm of the world is heard without, dimly as if in a dream; like the rushing of waters to an unseen deep; or the terrorless murmur of the falling avalanche, far off among the ice-mailed peaks and the plains of dintless rock. Above in the outstretched hand of the Father of Heaven, and ready to fall ere the sound of prayer has died away, is that peace which the world cannot give.

Yet is this the face of a woman even more than the face of a saint. It is the face of a woman, with all her unspoken tenderness and grace, with all her blended passion and purity, with all her self- devotion to the call of love and duty. We see no background to this glorious painting, for wherever we look our eyes revert to the woman or the saint. We see no changing sky nor waving branch nor carven column. But let us turn to the next painting, the lower type.

Maclise's "Origin of the harp" is taken from an old Irish legend, which showeth how a maiden of the sea, grieving for an inconstant earthly lover, was changed by pitying Heaven into a harp, with the gold hair streaming over her outstretched arm into strings.

Still as heaven rise the walls of the strong sea-cavern; in sweeps as graceful as the dome of heaven, soars the vaulted majesty of its roof.

Purple, and pale-golden, and breasted with infinite delicate rose-colour is the western sky, and gleaming thro' a triple arch of mighty cloud, whose curves of crimson foam have gathered strange and magnificent radiance from the upshot lightning of the sunken sun. Far above, in the deepening hollow of intense blue, pale star-faces glimmer dimly and immeasurably far behind the veil of Heaven.

Tossing in crests and gulfs of nameless and inconceivable splendour, as though along its troubled waters were drifting in thousands the severed plumes of angels when there was war in heaven, the sea springs like the tide of battle from the west.

Like flakes of gorgeous sea-wave hung on high, the stalactites that wreath the arching granite of the cavern's mouth, quiver beneath the light of evening.

And in the midst of all this, like Venus rising from the wild sea-foam; like the angel of the earth crowned with the flowers of the sea;

like the starry light of woman's heroism piercing the horizon of grief, stands the maiden of the sea. She is outlined against the infinite glory of the waves and the infinite glory of the sky, like a gold-fringed cloud against the sunset, quenching with the pearl-glow of her matchless beauty the rifts of rosy light that hallow the furrows of iron rock; making holy with the tenderness of her exquisite form the passionless eternity of granite.

Upon a fantastic spire of rock her arm is resting listlessly, and over this, its ivory support, as dawnlight from behind a stainless bar of sky-foam, streams the sunrise of her golden hair. And as the brine-drops glide along its folds, and fall like tears, we almost hear them tinkle on the wave below.

There are no words to tell you of her face. None sparkling enough, none delicate enough, none gorgeous enough, none loving enough. With the halo of sea flowers round her head, even as the halo of grief around her heart, with the faded archness of that simple brow; with the exquisite pathos and lovingness of that divine mouth; with the statuesque symmetry of that perfect cheek, no words, no organ-music, no old Homeric gushes of sweet sound can approach the depth of her intense beauty.

Oh maiden; yesterday the coy and laughing fairy of the sea: the rocks are hard and cold, and the sun is going down; the overlapping echoes of the cavern-haunting waters among yon granite vaults is chilly music for such ears as thine; but thou returnest home no more. The large calm eyes of "that great sea-snake under the sea" shall look in at thy palace-gates for love of thee in vain. Morning shall golden-garb himself to kiss thee, and thou shalt not know it; Evening shall stretch forth crimson arms to thee from out the west, and thou shalt not see her turn away in grief. Farewell.

THE IDYL

OF THE

PAINTED WINDOW.

✠

Day after day the sunshine bursts in joy upon it that solemn painted window, and falls athwart the ancient aisle in ghostlike gleams of purple and crimson and green. As I see the wan splendour on the storied pavement, weaving fit fringe for the stone coverlid which hides so many patient dead, I think that it is the departed spirit of the sunlight ; that the presence of darkness and sorrow, which haunts that midnight sky, and that kneeling form, has speared the young beams in their mirth, and that they have fallen there to die.

I cannot say with how much awe this window is associated in my mind; but think I can tell you why.

It is a scene once enacted in the Garden of Gethsemane; one steeped in such calm as belongs only to midnight and to unutterable woe ; it is a figure kneeling in grief beneath a moonlight sky. Above the hollow of the deep blue heaven, and outlining its shadowy sweep, is a gorgeous arch of Gothic tracery, winged with hues as glowing as the cloud-flakes of a northern dawn.

Strangely has the artist's fancy written her own story in the winding belts and fragile fringes of colour, which fill that upper arch. There are bold sweeps of crimson, that tell of joy in the working of them, and consciousness of power. There are, behind these, uncertain depths of purple, little fairy nooks which I dreamily people with fairy faces. Doubtless there was a rustling of branches in that corner of the designer's heart wherein a magical face was framed with sunlit leaves. There are other twilight nooks, solemn like lines of care ; and mighty blood-tints tempered down like olden memories ; and symmetry of purpose through the whole like the strong will of a man. Crossing and re-crossing before the face of it all, like wintry branches sharp against the sky, is the framework holding each incomplete panel of the painting to its fellow.

Against me as I stand, lazily pencilling these my thoughts, is a marble maiden on her couch of stone, with hands uplifted as in prayer. Deep rose-tint from the spell-bound sunlight falls upon the unwaning youth of her cold lips, and drowns their pallor in a lake of radiance. Such breath of life it is, as that wherewith the setting sun makes passionate the dead, eternal snows. Shadowy blue is on her breast, and faint gold upon her hands. The blue is from the heaven that bends above Judean hills, and the gold from angels' wings. Here then we come to the noblest feature of my wondrous window.

Through the far slanted shadows of the ages we see thee, Oh holy, kneeling figure, as the disciples beheld thee, dimly, through the leaf-vaults of Gethsemane.

We see as they of old who could not watch, with purblind eyes, the terrible breaking of the All-loving heart ; the tears of blood deep-wrung from the Eternal brow.

With what hushed step the silver-footed stars have crowded to the edge of heaven, this awful passion-night. Down among the

scented caverns of the olive boughs, lighting their quiet dusk as with the gleam of an unearthly dawn, and laying tender hand upon the drooping plumes of palm, rains the reflected pearl-light from their bent and eager foreheads, as from the towers of night, they watch the battle between Love and Death. Deep in the darkness of the broad-leaved thickets the wind lies marble-still, as if the earth had held her breath. May we not say how echoless the plains of heaven while the angels sorrow in the sorrow of their Lord.

Shadowy, and pallid, and fearful, the faces of the angels that are fallen gather on the faint circle of the horizon, with strained brows glooming through its haze of splendour, like the ghastly writing on Belshazzar's palace-wall. Beauty, strange beauty is on them, as in dead flowers on a lowered coffin. Wisdom, and might, and immortality are written upon them, wisdom, and might, and immortality, and damnation. Gather upon the faint-rimmed horizon, Oh ye anxious faces, fire-furrowed with the tears ye wept of old. Gather ye thickly from the shaken haunts of hell, for the clangour of the conflict is dying, and Love hath conquered Agony and Death. Helmeted with adamant, and crested with the everlasting flame, but with no bow of promise arching over your despairing hosts, gather ye towards the field of strife.

There is a golden stir of harpstrings in the eternal deeps, where bird-song hath not sounded, nor wing of eagle fanned. Upon the upraised brow of the Beloved Son, the light that knows no falling eve has slanted from the outswung gates, whose beams are studded with the uncounted worlds. Rank beyond rank afar, in the unmeasured dawn of heaven, glitter and flash the robes of many companies of angels, and star-beams pale and die before the glory of white brows. The distant murmur of the myriad wings sounds upon earth like the music-march of wind through "immemorial elms"; thespelendour of them is as the splendour of the moon-path on the

sapphire-hollowed, lustrous-crested main ; the scarce-heard echo of the song before the Throne more silver-solemn than the cymballed falling of un-numbered brooks into a sunlit sea.

The sorrow and the struggle vanish from the face of the All-suffering Christ. And while the thundrous anthem rises throne-ward from the angel-sons of God,—the pauses of alternate chaunting filled with chords more wondrous-tender than the moss-veil over granite clefts—hushed fingers weave the martyr-halo round the crown of the immortal King.

And the brook of Kedron wanders on in passionate soliloquy, as to wherefore this should be ; and man saw it not, and believed it not. Therefore, Oh men, believe some little that ye cannot prove, lest in your march of reason ye should plant the heel on such a love as this.

LONG AGO.

✠

A very great city is the City of Long Ago. With the purple stain of its domes and turrets lying cloudlike on the far horizon, it seems to us like the vanishing shadow of a gorgeous-tinted, many-peopled dream ; and whoso enters its gate, straightway sorrow and darkness fade from his soul as the twilight of dawn before the sun ; ambition loses its baseness, passion its impurity, and envy and hate are dead and sink into the deeps of everlasting Love. Grief is no more the twin-sister of Love, and Rachel clasps again her children, and is comforted.

A very glorious city is the city of the past. The columns of her shadowy temples are of eternal granite, and the marble of her carven palaces is startled by the clangour of no falling feet ; but dying echoes of unearthly music cluster among the sculptures of immortal men, and forever dying, linger forever. No sunlight is there, save that round the foreheads of heroes, no moonlight, save that on the up-raised brows of martyrs ; but the gleam of pallid waters in the hollows of the hills, and the light of pallid crowns of flame on the city-fringing peaks, and everlasting twilight, the twilight of a dead eternity, the shadows of the wings of grey-haired centuries, the unstarred dimness of the irrevocable grave. But if we strain our hearing in a lull of sound among the roaring wheels of earth, a thousand solemn measures of Eolian music waft to us across the plain of years,

like the voice of many waving woodlands, or the song of many silver-tripping, pleasant-murmuring streams. It is the sound of hero-voices, and of "songs sung of old beneath the purple night." It is a music of ancient weeping, gliding dreamily, mournfully over lakes and valleys of time, and it is crowned, like an olden graveyard, with a sobbing of funeral bells.

A very beautiful city is this City of Long Ago; for the blackened rifts that are in its walls are woven over with a veil of pathos ; it is arched over from gate to gate with a rainbow of fallen tears ; it is haunted by great deeds, which are prayers for mankind ; and it is painted on roof and porch with the loves and the triumphs of a bygone world. Is it not easy to understand why the days long dead are so beautiful to us ? There is a strange quality in our composition, which leads us to forget all the evil that blotted the past, when it it was not past; so that when we look backward from the Citadel of the present, our annals seem the records of what man might have been. And this strange city keeps growing larger, and larger. Ere long our present stronghold, wherein we fight against the thronging hosts of Wrong and Sin, shall be a part of it. Sometime the towers of the future, so distant on the other horizon, of which we catch such feeble glimpses here, with the gold light glancing from the prostrate crowns, and the rich thunder of the Eternal voice, and the all-present poetry of the Father's love,—the towers whose portals are called judgment,—they too shall mingle with the city of the past. On that day it will be, when the great splendour shall burst upon us ; when we shall see once more the crown of thorns, as it were a diadem of woven starlight; and the only cloud in the sky of heaven shall be one crimsoned by the dawn of the everlasting Sun, the scarred cloud of human aspirations, with lines of sorrow crossing its radiant folds, and bars of blood faint-seen amid its depths, but dying slowly, lustrously, into the shadowless calm of that time, when there shall be no more grief.

THE PALACE OF THE GREAT KING.

I.

Where fairy mosses at their granite looms
Weave wondrous woof of gold and almondine ;
Where beeches wave no more their greenlit glooms
In yonder night of pine ;

II.

Where down the mighty slope, with cymbal din,
The streamlets bear their foam on tinkling feet,
The King a palace built, and reared therein
A golden mercy-seat.

III.

All day from dawning east to rosy west,
Falling within thro' many an open door,
Like golden tresses on an ivory breast,
Slept sunbeams on the floor.

IV.

All day strange gleams on porphyry pillars basked ;
And thro' the vast, quaint-carven oriel,
The shafts of sunlight, gorgeous-robed, and masked,
On sculptured marble fell.

V.

And silent forms with awful brows, that leant
From column-thrones, flushed by that solemn glow
Shone dim thro' wreathèd smoke that upward went
From censers swinging slow.

VI.

For all the mighty oriel splendour-dyed,
And all the deep-set windows burning near,
With forms of those who in the building died
Were blazoned deep and clear.

VII.

Here stood Saint Stephen in the judgment place,
Amid a crowd of gazers, rapt, alone;
Immortal beauty fallen on his face
From the Eternal Throne.

VIII.

And here in Patmos, angel-guarded, he
Whom JESUS lovèd, in his awful trance
Heard mighty music from the throne-lit sea,
And gave it utterance.

IX.

And central, towered from trampled Calvary
The nailèd form of Him who all things bore;
The King of Love, thorn-crowned with agony
To reign for evermore.

X

And underneath that Cross were offered up
Upon a golden altar, spread with white,
The Living Bread, and the Eternal Cup,
Daily at dawning light.

XI.

As mailèd Night trod thro' the gate of gold,
From unseen harpstrings, clang'd by angel-hands
In pillared glooms, rich thunder-chords were rolled,
Breeze-borne to far-off lands.

XII.

And when the golden gate again outswung,
Before the Dawn-spears in their burning march,
Alternate voices, silver-chaunting, rung
Rich change from arch to arch.

XIII.

And when deep stillness fell on harp and voice,
From western windows came a dreamy chaunt
Of waters, falling with faint-echoed noise
From the baptismal Font.

XIV.

Then spake the King. "This palace have I built,
This altar reared for awful sacrifice,
That whoso kneeleth here, tho' black with guilt,
The King's own son may rise."

XV.

Ah! deaf, deaf children of the mighty King,
Who kneel in houses your own hands have made,
Who have no church, no awful Offering,
Hear what the King hath said.

THE DREAMER.

The butterfly dreams on the blossom ;
The gold-lily dreams on the wave ;
Thus dreaming for ever, we'll float down the river,
To the dreamland whose gate is the grave.

A SUNRISE SONG.

There is a dawn to Love, as unto day,
A tremulous twilight throbbing with great stars,
And fringed with faint far beams, that break the grey
With shifting silver bars.

My soul is standing in this charmèd dawn,
Watching the lilies waken one by one;
Watching the pale-haired Light from lawn to lawn
Steal from the unseen Sun.

My soul is roselit by this charmèd dawn,
The charmèd dawn of this my love to thee,
As on grey hills, across wild waters drawn,
Falls roselight o'er the sea.

SKATING SONG.

The rose is dead, the daisy dead,
The lily in the hollow;
The wave beneath our iron tread
Has lost its lover-swallow.
Rose-splendours dye the western sky,
Rose-splendours in our pathway lie.

Fall rose and gold on hill and wold,
And rampart quaint and olden,
For Heaven is rolled in rose and gold,
And earth is rosy-golden;
Then ere night creep up the eastern steep,
Fly we along the frozen deep.

S. VALENTINE'S EVE.

I.

Mighty sunset bars are lying
Gold-wrought on the purple moors ;
Mighty voices, solemn-sighing
Echoes of old song, are dying
In the slumbrous sycamores.

II.

Golden sunsets, sadly, slowly
Fade into the deepened blue ;
Wild wind-voices chaunting lowly
Echoes of old anthems holy,
Sadly are they dying too.

III.

Stir of wind in branches olden,
Sunshafts fallen from above,
Are but types of that more golden
Light eternal, unbeholden,
That strange heart-song namèd Love.

IV.

Earnest heart, by beauty never
Can thy path forsaken be ;
Lives like thine, of pure endeavour,
By that love which lives for ever
Must for ever crownèd be.

THE SEA.

I.

As one of old, in hallowed Galilee,
With human foot the ridgèd waters trod,
So we must cross on foot a troubled sea,
To touch the hand of God.

II.

By angels guided tread we from the shore,
On one hand Beauty, on the other Truth;
In front the passion-sea that rolls before
The palace-gates of youth.

III.

And though at times, like Peter wild with doubt,
We sink full deep beneath the hollowed wave,
The Lord Christ's hand, for ever stretchèd out,
Is ever strong to save.

THE POET.

Dawn-light on breast of the swallow,
Love-light in eye of the girl,
Sparkle and glimmer, grow fainter and dimmer,
Melt like the Nubian pearl.

Love-light in eye of the poet
Deepens in splendour for aye;
Poets in seeming, are angels that dreaming,
Wander from gates of the day.

THE TALISMAN.

The Knight of old who rode forth iron-veilèd
Amid the sword-clang of the sounding field,
Wore yet within his breast, blade-fenc'd and mailèd,
Some holy relic as a spirit-shield.

So when we join the battle of the Real
Leaving the dawn-hills of our golden youth,
Within our hearts some wild and loved ideal
Points us forever to the land of Truth.

The student sees on on pages dim and olden
The laurell'd brows of those who toil'd of yore;
The earthly poet, through his visions golden,
Hath starry glimpses of the eternal shore.

And on some hearts a far and holy splendour
Lingers at eve, like sunset on the fight;—
Dim faces, circled by the love-glow tender,
Look on them as the love-star on the night.

From heaven, once ours, our stainèd souls inherit
These beauty-dreams to gaze at as we climb;
And he whose gaze is constant, gives his spirit
Angel-wings to scale the ridge of time.—

For strongly struck he on a chord immortal,
Who sang that Truth and Beauty are the same;
And truly sing I, 'Beauty is the portal
Thro' which we reach the Truth-land of our aim.'

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